New England Deaconess Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

pulse
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Blizzard of Century paralyses Northeast, but the Deaconess never missed a beat

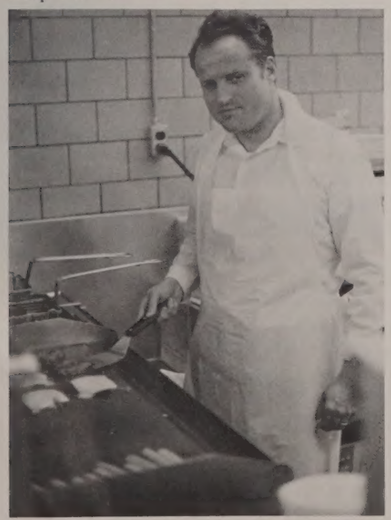
Hospital becomes temporary home for many visitors and employees

By 4 o'clock Monday afternoon, everyone knew it was going to be a big one. What they didn't know was how big. Snow driven by 80 mile-an-hour winds whipped in blinding sheets across the city. Businessmen locked up their offices and sent their staffs home. Storekeepers closed out cash registers, then rolled down the shutters. And prodded by memories of the snowstorm that buried the state only two weeks before, many headed home to enjoy the storm in front of the TV set.

The fury of the storm had just begun when this picture was taken outside Harris Hall at 4:30 Monday afternoon.

But for those whose calling is caring for the sick, no such luxury was possible. Emergencies are an anticipated facet of the job. At the Deaconess, those directly involved in patient care, as well as support and administrative staff, rose to the occasion with grace and professionalism – injected with a few cc's of good humor.

Even as the administration released all non-essential employees late in the afternoon, it became clear that a large segment of the night and morning shifts would be snowbound. Preparations were made accordingly. A nursing command post was set up in the Palmer 1 conference room. Administrative assistant Marjorie Pond coordinated staff scheduling while secretary Pamela Huling nursed a telephone that flashed and buzzed incessantly. Her major task – finding places for everyone to sleep.



Dean Annis, NEDH's chief financial officer, manned the hamburger grill for three days.

Ms. Pond and Ms. Huling stayed on the job through Thursday morning, sleeping only when circumstances allowed. Their intrepid example was echoed throughout the hospital.

The spirit of cooperation was infectious. Nursing students, their school closed for the first time in its 82-year history, quickly offered to help in building services and the laundry; seniors filled in as aides on the floors. Administrative personnel Gail Graham, Patty Heckel and Linda Bracken served the free meals offered in the cafeteria. Realizing secret dreams as a short order cook, chief financial officer Dean Annis, assisted for awhile by Assistant Director Ellen Howland, manned the hamburger grill for three days.

Students from Simmons, Wheelock and Emmanuel colleges, filled in making beds, washing dishes, and helping out the nursing staff. Even visitors, trapped by the storm, offered to help. Mrs. George Baker and Mrs. Evelyn Milder, both of Hyde Park, gave out patient trays and cleaned cafeteria tables.

"We're really enjoying the experience," said Mrs. Baker, who usually spends her days as editor of the *Hyde Park Tribune*.

Despite the best efforts of Ms. Huling, finding a place to sleep was tough. The motel at 110 Francis Street was quickly filled, but Deaconess people are a resourceful group. Diagnostic radiology became a dormitory while several storm refugees found comfortable spots in physical therapy, podiatry, and the dental clinic. Others favored the operating tables in ambulatory surgery, and a few preferred the tranquility of the shock therapy room.

The brunt of providing uninterrupted care to the hospital's nearly 500 patients rested squarely on the shoulders of the nursing staff. With red-eyed determination, many nurses worked double and triple shifts, catnapping when they could in conference rooms, lounges and solariums.

Not surprisingly, the hospital switchboard was jammed with calls. From 6:00 a.m. to midnight, Tuesday through Friday, all 32 incoming lines were continuously in use. In addition, the operators functioned as an answering service for the 60 doctors whose offices are in the Lowry Medical Office Building and took all Joslin Clinic calls.

Locked in hand-to-hand combat with the storm was the laundry and grounds department who plowed and shovelled in around-the-clock shifts from Monday night to Thursday afternoon. Dick Perrin, assistant manager of purchasing services, attacked the snowbanks with a vengeance from behind the wheel of the hospital's front-end loader.

Meanwhile, men from the maintenance and engineering department were digging packed snow out of the ventilation system intake ducts. The big fans that pull in circulating air were finding more snow than air to put through the system. In addition, the men worked long hours boarding up the blown-out door of the Shields Warren Radiation Laboratories, retrieving a large metal cover which blew off the Farr Building roof, fixing leaks, and helping in the snow-removal operation.

As the snow piled up, so did the emergency supply requests; but warehouse personnel Dan Champagne, John Robb, Mike Gilboy and Jim

(Continued on page 2)

A Letter of Thanks

The blizzard of '78 is now only a memory, but longer than visions of snow and a trafficless city will live the dedicated, unselfish spirit expressed by our employees during the emergency.

Crises inevitably compel us to demand more of ourselves and others; just how much more our people were willing to give was truly remarkable. Not only did this display of pride and professionalism enable the hospital to maintain its vital mission to the sick, but it instilled in all of us a stronger sense of who we are as the Deaconess family – an asset that will remain long after the snow is gone.

The performance of everyone during the storm was a tangible reaffirmation of our total commitment to the highest quality patient care.

Laurens MacLure, *President*
Richard E. Lee, *Director*

Suzanne Smith RN, on the job in DTU West with her transportation at her side.

Storm statistics and surprises

*Snow depth: 27.1 inches

*Storm duration: 32 hours 40 mins.

*Wind velocity: 69-92 M.P.H.

*Tides: 16 feet above normal

*Evacuees: 10,000

*Cost: Approx. $1 billion

But here's the kicker. Although this is now the worst winter in 105 years, meteorologists from the U.S. National Weather Service are referring to the recent weather as "extreme" but "within the normal bounds of variation."

The point these experts are making is that the winters of the 50's and 60's were abnormally stable, and only now are we getting back to normal.

Blizzard. . .

(Continued from page 1)

Keady saw to it that those requests were filled and reached their proper destinations. It wasn't easy, because the trucks weren't going anyplace for a couple of days. So the warehouse crew emptied a good strong shipping carton, rigged it out like a sled, and dragged supplies to the hospital.

The fact that many called the Deaconess home for several days produced a special feeling of warmth and comradery. Everyone pitched in and helped out where help was needed, regardless of what job they usually performed; and most seemed to find it a rewarding experience. Walter Hirtle, weekend supervisor of the maintenance and engineering department, said it best: "I got to know people here that I'd never usually talk to, and I think it was great that employees experienced other people's jobs. It will help them better understand the problems of different departments. I enjoyed the whole thing."

However, while it may have been fun for awhile, nerves were running a bit ragged, smiles a little forced, by Thursday and Friday. The realization that things just weren't going to get back to normal overnight began to sink in. A senior administrator articulated the feeling: "I'm sick of it."

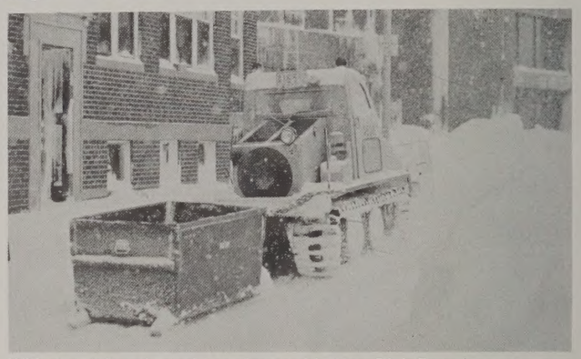
But as more and more fresh faces appeared to relieve those who had stayed for the duration, allowing them to go home and relax, prospects for a speedy transition to business-as-usual looked bright.

Laurens MacLure, president, and Richard E. Lee, director, both expressed their deepest appreciation to those staff members and employees who, in a time of potential crisis, performed magnificently in finest Deaconess tradition.

"I would personally like to thank all those hospital employees," Mr. Lee said, "who so beautifully demonstrated the meaning of concerned, quality patient care during the snowstorm. Nothing gives me more pleasure than knowing so many who care so much."

Snowplow struggles to keep main entrance clear.

Help went where help was needed. (l.-r.) Linda Bracken, materials management; Patty Heckel, out patient billing; and Gail Graham, administration, served free meals provided by the cafeteria during height of the storm.



With specially adapted laundry card in tow, Dick Reardon, manager of materials management, pilots the hospital snowplow up Autumn Street. Destination: Simmons College. Mission: To bring back food supplies.

Storm busting heroics and other noble deeds

One of the most enduring memories for those who weathered out the storm here is of Dick Reardon, director of materials management, sitting in the cafeteria wearing a bright orange slicker and snow boots. He has a grapefruit in one hand and a walkie-talkie in the other. He is simultaneously eating the grapefruit, directing three supply vehicles via the walkie-talkie, and processing a barrage of information. Can he pick up some nursing students from Medfield State? The Baptist would appreciate it if he would deliver some things over there. Oh yes, and the National Guard will be here any minute with pharmacy supplies from Andover.

Mr. Reardon is very tired, but he won't tell you that. His eyes look past all around him, mind totally focused on the job. When dietary tells him they're running out of milk, bread and orange juice, he asks Dino Fantegrossi and Jack Rebman over at maintenance and engineering to help him out. They bolt wooden runners onto a laundry cart which he chains behind the tracked snowplow, then takes off into the storm. He's back a short while later with the needed food.

Together with his crew from materials management and volunteers from other departments, Mr. Reardon picked up employees from Boston and the suburbs, located and brought essential supplies to the Deaconess and other area hospitals, including a shipment of ice cream to Children's, and assisted in the mammoth snow-clearing operation.

Equally fearless in the face of the storm was laundry and grounds manager, Roger Peterson, who on hearing that homeless families temporarily housed in the Revere High School gym had no towels or soap, immediately suggested the Deaconess lend a hand.

Given the go-ahead, Mr. Peterson loaded 1200 towels and 4000 bars of soap into his camper-style van, secured a military police escort, and headed for Revere. Several hours and a blown tire later, he arrived at the gym at 3:00 a.m. The towels were returned the next day by a National Guard truck, washed within an hour, and sent back to Revere.

Meanwhile, the laundry undertook the task of washing clothes for the 60-man M.P. unit stationed nearby. Their cleanliness restored, the troops returned the favor by helping with deliveries and taking people on errands.

Nutrition week to heighten awareness of improved diet and food choices

The Sixth Annual National Nutrition Week, scheduled for March 5 to 11, will be marked at the Deaconess this year by special activities organized by the dietetic interns.

The purpose of nutrition week is to increase awareness of wise food choices and to introduce the dietary goals endorsed last February by the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs. The goals were formulated following a comprehensive study of American eating habits conducted by the committee.

The Deaconess community will have the opportunity to become more aware of their food choices, in relationship to the proposed U.S. government dietary guidelines, through participation in such nutrition week activities as low salt day and low cholesterol day in the cafeteria. Attention will also be given to the varied menus planned by the dietetic interns.

Advocates of an improved diet for all Americans believe the goals will provide a practical guide to better food choices and eating habits, while at the same time moving towards a national food and nutrition policy. The goals suggest the following changes in food selection and preparation:

1. Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
2. Decrease consumption of meat; increase consumption of poultry and fish.
3. Decrease consumption of foods high in fat and partially substitute polyunsaturated fat for saturated fat.
4. Substitute nonfat milk for whole milk.
5. Decrease consumption of butterfat, eggs and other high cholesterol sources.

6. Decrease consumption of sugar and foods high in sugar content.
7. Decrease consumption of salt and foods high in salt content.

Although more research has to be conducted in the area of nutrition, both the American Medical Association and the American Dietetic Association agree that there is a need to establish guidelines based on current information. The dietary goals are intended to promote health in a preventive manner rather than curatively or therapeutically.

Five graduate one-year program in blood banking administration

Five medical technologists were graduated December 29 from a one-year training program in blood banking. At ceremonies held in Harris Hall, Dr. Agnes Kim, blood bank director, presented diplomas and pins to the graduates, each of whom earns the title of Specialist in Blood Banking (SBB).

Guest speaker Dr. James Tullis, chairman of the department of medicine, sketched a colorful history of blood banking and transfusion. Particularly interesting was his story of the first human blood transfusions on the battlefields of World War I.

Dr. Merle A. Legg, chairman of the department of pathology; Dr. Bradley E. Copeland, chief, division of clinical pathology; Laurens MacLure, president; and Richard E. Lee, director, all congratulated the graduates and wished them good fortune in the future. The speakers also emphasized the vital importance of blood banking within the health care field.

"Before being admitted to the program, an applicant must be a medical technologist with several years experience in the field," said Maruditsa Mitsiu, blood bank supervisor and educational coordinator. She taught many of the classes, which, in turn, were integrated with practical experience.

Natalie Czernicki also shared many of the responsibilities of training the blood bank specialists, who, having completed the program, are now eligible for administrative and supervisory duties in the blood banking field.

The graduates are: Donna Gage, who has assumed duties as the blood bank supervisor at Beth Israel Hospital; Linda Gilbert, now blood bank supervisor at Augusta General Hospital in Maine; Martha Keegan, working for the Red Cross as assistant director of technical services for quality control; Diane Tessier, now the technical coordinator at Burbank Hospital in Fitchburg; and Susan Bileau, who has chosen to stay at the Deaconess. The training program was audited by Dolores Fici, a blood bank medical technologist at NEDH.

Specialists in Blood Banking graduate at ceremonies held in Harris Hall. Participants are (l.-r.): Richard E. Lee, president; Dr. James Tullis, chairman, department of medicine; Dr. Merle Legg, chairman of the department of pathology; Dr. Agnes Kim, director of the blood bank; graduates Diane Tessier, Sue Bileau, Linda Gilbert, Martha Keegan, Donna Gage and auditor Dolores Fici; Laurens MacLure, director; and Dr. Bradley Copeland, chief, division of clinical pathology.

Personnel director explains employee assistance program on channel 4's *Action* show

Mr. Giroux

Robert F. Giroux, director of personnel, appeared on Channel 4's *Action* program on Thursday, January 26 to publicize the Deaconess' new Employee Assistance Program. Role playing an employer confronting a behavioral problem in an employee, Mr. Giroux demonstrated the techniques hospital supervisors will soon learn at briefing sessions sponsored by the program.

Mr. Giroux's TV appearance was part of Channel 4's marathon presentation focusing attention on alcoholism in the United States. From 8 p.m. to approximately 1:30 a.m. viewers observed interviews with friends and relatives of alcoholics, listened to a discussion of alcoholism and minorities, and contributed comments to the talk show segment of the program.

The Employee Assistance Program is an early identification system designed to help employees who appear to have problems interfering with their job performance. Since these situations are commonly linked to personal problems, the program refers employees confidentially to appropriate community resources for professional help. The entire program is based on job performance criteria and voluntary participation. Studies show that job performance deterioration frequently results from a variety of marital, financial, and legal problems as well as from alcohol and drug abuse.

Bruce Davidson, Coordinator of Appleton Industrial Consultation Services, will work with Mr. Giroux in leading Deaconess briefing sessions running through March 3. In existence at the Deaconess as a pilot project since June, the Employee Assistance Program has enjoyed a high rate of success so far. The follow-up groups and counseling sessions which form part of the program help employees to maintain positive changes in their behavior.

A number of organizations in business and industry have benefited from programs similar to the one being implemented at the Deaconess. General Motors states that lost man hours have been reduced by 50 percent, while accidents at work have dropped a dramatic 82 percent. The most rewarding benefits, however, are those enjoyed by the employee who learns to cope successfully with seemingly insurmountable problems while discovering that genuine concern and support are available.

february is HEART month

WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE

American Heart Association

15 hospitals represented at US sponsored energy conservation symposium

An energy symposium, tailored to the problems of health care facilities and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, was hosted by the Deaconess in Joslin Auditorium on January 19 and 20. It was attended by representatives from 15 east coast hospitals.

The main objective of the day-and-a-half workshop was to provide guidelines to health care administrators for implementing energy conservation programs. The energy clinic also offered suggestions for achieving cost effectiveness without jeopardizing patient comfort or quality health care.

The program was coordinated by James Benoit, assistant to the director for management systems, and Pamela Huling, administration.

Topics explored at the symposium included the future outlook for energy, energy legislation, management for energy savings, collection and analysis of energy data, and practical energy savings. Time was also provided for problem-solving sessions of specific case histories.

Director Richard E. Lee gave a welcoming address on behalf of both the Deaconess and the Massachusetts Hospital Association, of which he is the president. Then Hubert D. Sycamore, assistant director for plant operation, explained to workshop participants energy conservation techniques that have been successfully implemented at the Deaconess.

For example, Mr. Sycamore said that over the past four years the hospital has reduced its utility costs by nearly a million dollars. Specific steps taken to accomplish these savings include ensuring that steam traps are tight, that condensate is returned to the powerhouse, and that heat is not furnished to building areas during hours when they are not in use.

Electricity has been conserved through such simple steps as turning off unneeded lights and using the chilled water supply, rather than individual electric window units, for air conditioning. In 1972 the department of engineering and maintenance, under the direction of Cornelius Keating, achieved substantial savings by removing half of the light bulbs in hospital corridors and the cafeteria. The change made virtually no difference to the working environment.

Mr. Keating has formed an energy committee within his department to generate ideas on energy conservation. Kitchen air handling equipment is now shut down overnight, while reducing nighttime energy use in the Meissner Building will result in a projected annual savings of approximately $50,000. These and other efforts have contributed to the Deaconess' outstanding energy conservation record.

Representatives of the federal government discussed the availability of grants for energy conservation purposes.

Since 1973 the hospital has not increased its energy consumption even though its building area requiring utilities has increased by more than 30 percent. Future conservation plans at the Deaconess call for the installation of a $95,000 Honeywell Energy Management Control System that will be able to identify equipment of mechanical systems that use utilities and program them to shut down according to the time of day or the temperature. It is expected that the control system will pay for itself in approximately 18 months.

Both Mr. Sycamore and Mr. Keating pointed out that although the hospital has implemented energy conservation on a large scale, the individual employee can make a substantial contribution by turning off lights during lunches and breaks, shutting down equipment not in use, and lowering office temperatures when appropriate.

The *Pulse* sparks memories of youth

The historical photograph in December's edition of the *Pulse* depicting a solarium in the Deaconess Building as it appeared around 1920, caught the eye of Mrs. Donald Sabine, wife of the hospital's late director of maintenance and engineering. The woman recuperating in the solarium was her mother, Mertie Angell.

The year was 1924, and Mrs. Angell had just been operated on by the young Dr. Frank Lahey, for whom the operation was his first. And displaying the care and compassion that was to contribute so much to his later professional prominence, Dr. Lahey, founder of the Lahey Clinic, sat up all night to ensure that his first surgical patient was resting comfortably.

Mrs. Sabine's father was also a physician, in addition to being a Methodist minister, and was naturally delighted when his daughter announced her intentions of becoming a nurse.

"I was so impressed with the care my mother received from Dr. Lahey and the Deaconess nurses, that I knew right then what I wanted to do with my life," Mrs. Sabine said.

She entered the New England Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing in 1925 and later became a head nurse at the hospital.

Mr. Sabine

FROM THE DEACONESS ARCHIVES . . . . . Top photo: The Deaconess Building, originally a 50-bed facility opened in 1907, was added to in 1923 expanding its bed capacity to 180. Below: Harris Hall was built in 1913 as a School of Nursing, with a second wing added in 1927. Both photographs were taken in the late '20s.

Mr. Sabine served for 42 years

Many members of the Deaconess family will be saddened to learn of the death of Donald L. Sabine, who served in the maintenance and engineering department for 42 years, 31 of them as its director. He died December 8 at the hospital to which he had devoted so much of his life. He was 69.

When Mr. Sabine first came to work at the hospital, it consisted of the Deaconess, Palmer and Harris Hall buildings. His job was driving an electric truck through the tunnels connecting the three buildings.

During the evenings he attended Wentworth Institute, and later the Franklin Technological Institute, earning his electricians license in 1933. He then served as the hospital electrician until his appointment as director of maintenance and engineering in 1939.

Mr. Sabine was an enthusiastic bowler on the hospital league, and enjoyed fishing and photography. He was also a keen gardener who took particular pride in his roses.

Dr. Clouse writes book

Dr. Melvin E. Clouse, chairman, department of radiology, and assistant clinical professor of radiology at Harvard Medical School recently published a book entitled *Clinical Lymphography*. The work is part 7 of *Golden's Diagnostic Radiology* series and is written primarily for resident and practicing surgeons and oncologists, in addition to those who routinely perform lymphography.

The techniques of conventional contrast lymphography as well as those used in the special areas of carcinoma and lymphoma, are fully discussed,

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pulse

The New England Deaconess Hospital is a 489-bed and 14-building complex. Physicians from the Joslin Clinic, the Lahey Clinic, Overholt Thoracic Clinic and the general medical and surgical staffs serve the needs of their patients at the hospital. The Deaconess is internationally known for diagnosis, treatment and research in brain and chest surgery, cancer, diabetes and general medicine, and is affiliated with Harvard Medical School.

PULSE is published monthly by the public relations department of the New England Deaconess Hospital.

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Traffic came to a stop, but not the Deaconess (see front page).

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